

Storytelling

"Okay bub, bed time now!"

"Mummy, tell me a story?"

"Alright then, jump into bed!"

Storytelling is a very important part of our culture

A long time ago our people told a lot of old stories. These were the stories of how things were made, how the animals grew or changed, how people lived and moved around. They told stories of why the birds sang, or why they changed their colours, and why the stars shine at night, how people got their food or where the waterholes could be found. They told these stories to pass on the knowledge and understandings that our people needed to know in order to survive in this country, long ago.

Today we need these same stories to help us understand and enjoy the differences in lifestyles and traditions of our people. It will help us to know the stories, the traditions and songs of our culture, for it will provide us with windows to the world. It is good for us to know this and it will be good for us to pass this knowledge on to our kids. This will help us to learn and respect others.

We can take in these messages about other lifestyles and behaviour, and then learn responsible ways of doing things, and to understand why things are like they are.

It is good for kids to play outside and take in fresh air. To listen to the sounds of the world around them. To hear the singing of the birds or the sound of the wind in the trees; to walk on their land.

What do our kids need?

All kids need to talk, to play, to daydream, to read and to be told stories.

- Stories are important because they help kids cope with the feelings and problems that they may have.
- You can help kids carry on the tradition of our culture by telling the stories you remember from your childhood.
- Talk to your kids using your language and encourage them to use the words. This helps build their self esteem and confidence. It helps them develop a sense of belonging.
- Tell them stories of our Aboriginal history.
- By doing some of these things, you can help your kids to know who they are and to know of their Aboriginal Heritage. They will learn a lot spending this time with you.

This tip sheet, along with the full set of Parenting WA guides, is available in electronic format at www.communities.wa.gov.au



These things might help

- When your little kids or even your big kids ask you to tell them a story, you can begin by:
- Telling them some of the Dreaming stories.
- Teaching them to use some of your language.
- Spending time exploring outdoors and having fun with them.
- Telling them stories about family members.
- Teaching them some of the games you played as a kid.
- Singing some of the songs you remember.
- Being a good example for them—kids also learn from what they see.
- Pick up a book or make a book together. Share these stories together, point to the pictures and talk about them, point to the words and talk about the words and repeat, especially if your child is interested.
- If you know lots of your language it will be good to teach your children and if you don't know many words in language, you can teach the words you do know.

Share your stories with your kids and let them share theirs.
They will thrive on spending time with you.



Contacts

Parenting WA Line

A free 24/7 telephone information and support service for parents and children pre-birth to 18 years.

t: 1800 654 432 (free call)

w: www.communities.wa.gov.au

Department for Communities Aboriginal Early Years – Best Start Program

Best Start is a state-wide program for Aboriginal parents and carers with young children from babies to five years old. Best Start Services are located in the following areas:

- Armadale t: 08 9399 6489
- Carnarvon t: 08 9941 2105
- Goldfields t: 08 9093 3795
- Hedland t: 08 9172 3599
- Mandurah t: 08 9583 9802
- Marble Bar t: 0427 013 144
- Midland t: 08 9274 9411
- Moora t: 08 9651 1294
- Mullewa t: 0408 844 196
- Narrogin t: 08 9881 6693
- Roebourne t: 0438 926 558
- South Lake t: 0427 013 141

w: www.communities.wa.gov.au

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs – Closing the Gap

Closing the Gap initiatives provide grants and funding to support indigenous organisations and individuals.

t: 6218 1400

t: 1300 653 227

w: www.fahcsia.gov.au

Playgroup WA

To find your nearest playgroup

t: 1800 171 882

w: www.playgroupwa.com.au

The Raising Children Network

Helps parents with the day-to-day decisions of raising children and looking after their own needs.

w: www.raisingchildren.net.au

Aboriginal History Research Unit (AHRU)

The Department of Indigenous Affairs holds family history information including a large collection of personal cards and files relating to Aboriginal people of Western Australia and their families.

www.dia.wa.gov.au click on Aboriginal History Research Unit tab on left.

This Guide uses 'he' and 'she' in turn. Change to suit your child's sex.

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